Strong recovery in rail freight transport performance in the first nine months of 2010

Rail freight transport in Europe

The total performance of rail freight transport in the EU-27 was estimated at 389 billion tonne-kilometres in 2010, a rise of 7.9% compared with 2009. This increase reflects the recovery of rail freight transport following the economic crisis (which brought to an end a sustained period of growth over recent years.

The recovery in transport performance between 2009 and 2010 could be observed in a large majority of the Member States: the main exception was Greece, with a decrease of 20% of the total transport performance.
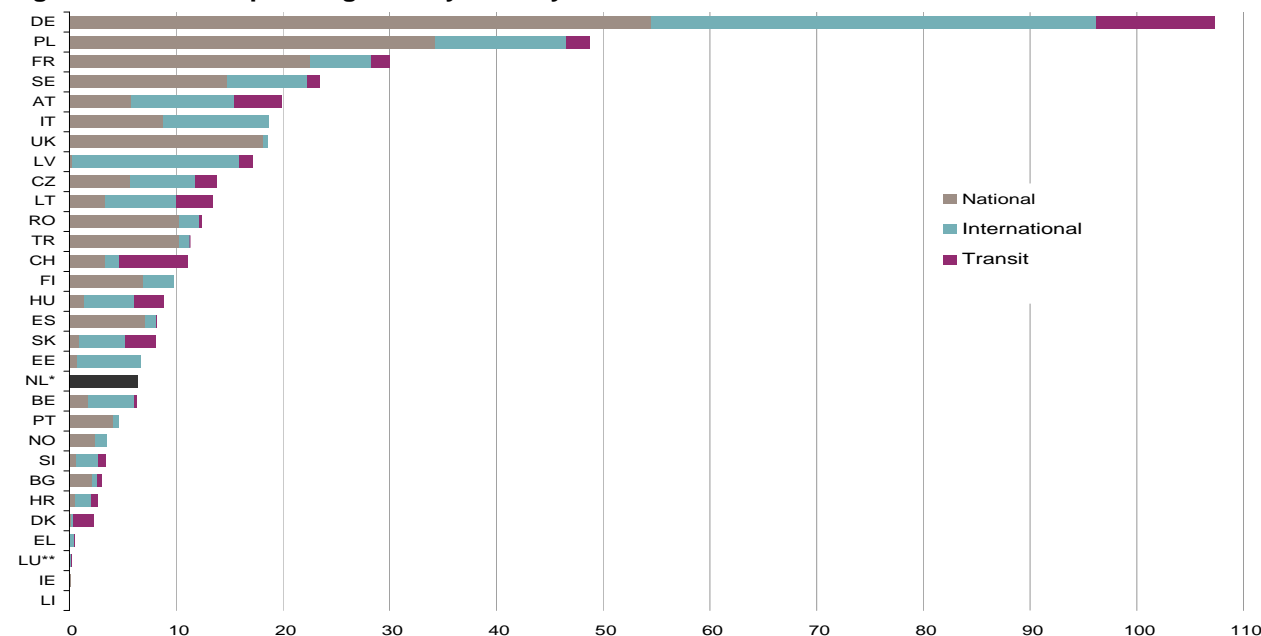
Looking at the development by quarter, the most significant changes were concentrated in the first nine months of the year. The quarterly increases were +9%, +15% and + 9% respectively, compared with the same quarters of 2009. The upwards trend slowed down at the end of 2010, with the last quarter registering a growth of +3% compared with the fourth quarter of 2009.

In absolute terms, France recorded the largest decrease (-2.2 billion tonne-kilometres between 2009 and 2010). Nevertheless, this country recorded the third highest rail transport performance in Europe, with 30 billion tonne-kilometres in 2010. Two other countries reported absolute decreases of more than 0.5 billion tonne-kilometres over the same period, Latvia (-1.5) and the United Kingdom (-0.6).

The share of international transport in the various countries is strongly linked to their geographical position within Europe. For the EU-27 as a whole, the share of international transport was around 37% in 2010, remaining quite stable over recent years.

Figure 1: Rail transport of goods by country in 2010 - in billion tkm

*NL: Only the total transport of the country is presented. The breakdown between national and transit transport is not available due to confidentiality.

**LU: 2009 data

Source: Eurostat (online data code: rail_go_typeall)

eurostat
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

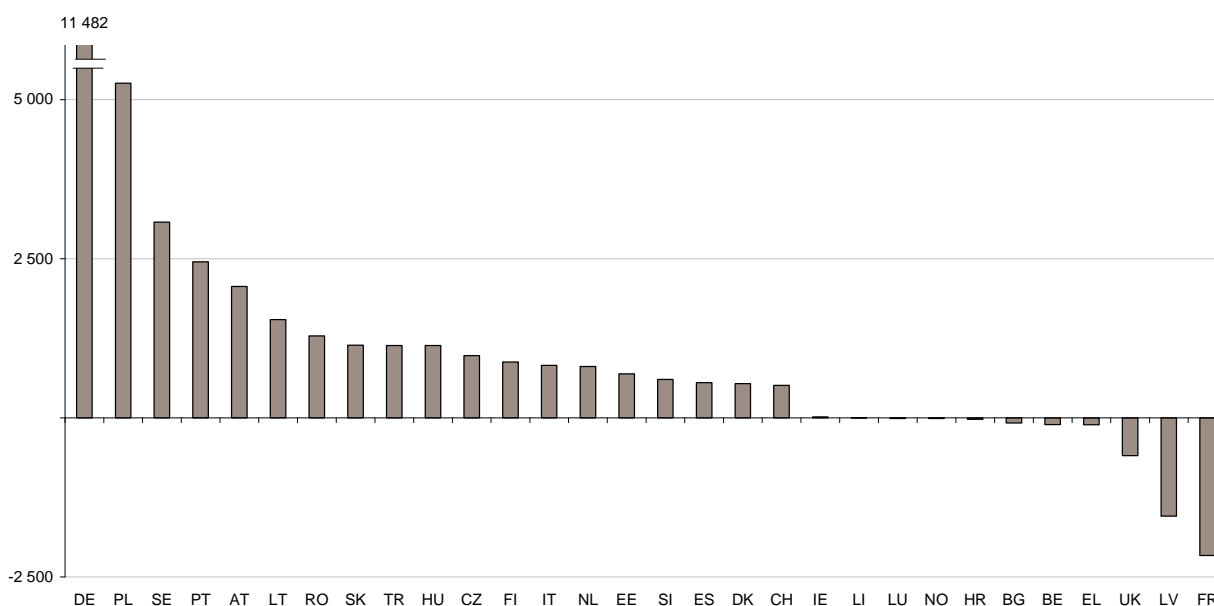## Different patterns at country level for rail freight transport performance

Despite the general increasing trend, the patterns at national level show substantial differences among countries. Of the 27 reporting countries for which data are available, 7 countries recorded a fall in freight transport performance between 2009 and 2010.

The highest increase was recorded by Denmark (+31.7%), followed by Slovenia (+21.4%) and Ireland (+16.6%). On the other end of the scale, the largest decrease between 2009 and 2010 was observed in Greece (-20.1%), followed by Latvia (-8.3%) and France (-6.7%).

In absolute terms, Germany recorded a significant rise of 11.5 billion tonne-kilometres (+12%), well ahead of Poland, with an increase of 5.3 billion tonne-kilometres. In contrast, France, Latvia and the United Kingdom registered the highest absolute falls among the reporting countries.

Figure 2: The development of rail transport: change between 2009 and 2010 - in million tkm

LU: 2010 data based on quarterly figures
Source: Eurostat (online data code: rail_go_typeall)

Focusing on the share of international transport, the geographical location of the countries plays a key role. Countries registering the highest share of international transport are located in key corridors within the European market. In the Baltic States of Latvia and Estonia, situated at the border between Europe and Russia, international transport accounted for 91% and 89% respectively of the total transport in 2010.

The Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium, also strategically situated in the heart of the European market, registered shares of 79%, 78% (2009 data) and 68% respectively. The key import harbours of Rotterdam and Antwerp, with important sea/rail transfers of goods dispatched within the European Union, strongly influence these figures.

In contrast, countries with specific geographical characteristics (at the periphery of the European Union or islands) recorded a low share of international transport by rail. Small shares are observed in the United Kingdom (2%) and in Portugal (11%). Turkey also recorded a low percentage (9%) which may also be linked to its peripheral position.

Assessing the recovery from the economic crisis, it is interesting to examine closely the evolution of quarterly figures (Table 2). While the recovery of rail transport performance at EU level remained noticeable over the course of 2010, the growth was more pronounced for the first half of the year. The first two quarters of 2010 showed increases of 9% and 15% respectively in freight transport performance compared with the corresponding quarter of 2009. This increasing trend was less marked for the second half of the year: while the increase recorded for the third quarter was 9%, it was only 3% for the last quarter of 2010.

Differences can be observed in the development of freight transport performance at country level. For example, Bulgaria and Portugal were the only countries registering a year-to-year decrease for the first half of 2010 (-6% and -5% respectively) followed by an increase for the second half of the year (+1% and +7% respectively).

Table 1: Evolution of total freight transport by rail - change between 2009 - 2010 - in million tkm and in %

	2009			2010			Change (Mio tkm)			Change (%)
	Detailed reporting	Simplified reporting	Total	Detailed reporting	Simplified reporting	Total	Detailed reporting	Simplified reporting	Total	Total
EU-25	**336 346**	**10 076**	**346 422**	**362 412**	*11 219*	*373 631*	**26 066**	*1 143*	*27 209*	*7.9*
EU-27	**349 251**	**11 404**	**360 655**	**376 981**	*12 088*	*389 069*	**27 730**	*684*	*28 414*	*7.9*
Belgium	5 947	427	6 374	6 268		:	321	:	:	:
Bulgaria	3 073	71	3 145	2 982	81	3 064	- 91	10	- 81	-2.6
Czech Republic	12 791	-	12 791	13 770	-	13 770	979	-	979	7.7
Denmark	1 697	3	1 700	2 238	1	2 239	541	- 2	539	31.7
Germany	95 834	-	95 834	107 317	-	107 317	11 482	-	11 482	12.0
Estonia	5 947	-	5 947	6 638	-	6 638	691	-	691	11.6
Ireland	79	-	79	92	-	92	13	-	13	16.6
Greece	545	-	545	435	-	435	- 110	-	- 110	-20.1
Spain	6 973	594	7 567	7 417	702	8 119	444	108	553	7.3
France	31 572	558	32 130	29 769	196	29 965	-1 803	- 362	-2 165	-6.7
Italy	16 232	1 559	17 791	15 139	3 477	18 616	-1 093	1 918	825	4.6
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	18 725	-	18 725	17 179	-	17 179	-1 546	-	-1 546	-8.3
Lithuania	11 888	-	11 888	13 431	-	13 431	1 543	-	1 543	13.0
Luxembourg	-	200	200	-		:	-		:	:
Hungary	6 699	973	7 673	7 635	1 173	8 809	936	200	1 136	14.8
Malta	-	-	-	-		-				
Netherlands	5 017	561	5 578	5 401	985	6 385	384	423	807	7.7
Austria	15 355	2 412	17 767	17 886	1 947	19 833	2 531	- 466	2 066	11.6
Poland	40 840	2 605	43 445	46 355	2 350	48 705	5 515	- 256	5 260	12.1
Portugal	2 174	-	2 174	2 313	-	2 313	139	-	139	6.4
Romania	9 832	1 256	11 088	11 587	788	12 375	1 755	- 468	1 287	11.6
Slovenia	2 668	149	2 817	3 283	137	3 421	615	137	752	21.4
Slovakia	6 931	33	6 964	8 054	51	8 105	1 123	18	1 140	16.4
Finland	8 872	-	8 872	9 750	-	9 750	877	-	877	9.9
Sweden	20 389	-	20 389	23 464	-	23 464	3 075	-	3 075	15.1
United Kingdom	19 171	-	19 171	18 576	-	18 576	- 595	-	- 595	-3.1
Liechtenstein	-	10	10	-	11	11	-			4.6
Norway	3 128	379	3 506	3 051	445	3 496	- 76	67	- 10	-0.3
Switzerland	9 495	1 069	10 565	10 750	323	11 074	1 255	- 746	509	4.6
Croatia	2 641	-	2 641	2 618	-	2 618	- 23	-	- 23	-0.9
Turkey	10 163	-	10 163	11 300	-	11 300	1 137	-	1 137	11.2

CH: data from detailed reporting are confidential. Estimates in italics
Source: Eurostat (online data code: rail_go_typeall)

Based on the figures available for the first half of 2011, Denmark registered the highest increase (+25% between the first six months of 2010 and 2011). Latvia was the only other country recording a rise of more than 20% (+21%). Five further reporting countries show year-to-year rises of more than 15% for the first half-year of 2011: Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

Table 2: Quarterly evolution of total freight transport by railways - in million tkm

	2009				2010				2011	
	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter	2nd quarter
EU-25	**78 650**	**80 135**	**84 417**	**90 345**	**86 009**	**92 138**	**91 922**	**92 041**	:	:
EU-27	**81 809**	**83 081**	**87 782**	**93 779**	**89 177**	**95 676**	**95 776**	**96 049**	:	:
Belgium	1 431	1 275	1 480	1 611	1 485	1 517	1 395	1 332	1 359	:
Bulgaria	830	747	705	791	690	786	745	761	706	832
Czech Republic	3 054	2 844	3 237	3 656	3 167	3 338	3 664	3 601	3 573	3 694
Denmark	390	407	427	475	501	570	562	607	655	688
Germany	23 123	23 006	23 693	25 830	25 099	27 396	27 241	27 580	27 550	29 393
Estonia	1 519	1 407	1 490	1 530	1 722	1 515	1 634	1 767	1 816	1 559
Ireland	16	19	18	27	22	21	22	27	25	25
Greece	136	127	140	142	108	106	109	112	:	:
Spain	1 783	1 641	1 674	1 875	1 864	1 985	1 772	1 797	2 016	2 020
France	7 519	8 020	8 271	8 319	7 836	7 920	7 817	6 393	8 971	8 583
Italy	3 645	3 460	3 090	3 374	4 050	4 105	3 599	3 801	3 798	3 906
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	4 914	4 973	4 371	4 467	4 597	4 274	3 986	4 323	5 377	5 397
Lithuania	2 759	2 734	3 081	3 314	3 397	3 107	3 232	3 695	3 765	3 820
Luxembourg	42	45	54	59	74	89	14	14	11	9
Hungary	1 411	1 581	1 744	1 964	1 628	1 982	1 967	2 048	1 494	1 694
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	1 342	1 129	1 148	1 367	1 404	1 375	1 196	1 328	1 414	1 455
Austria	3 453	3 800	3 896	4 206	3 945	4 650	4 621	4 671	3 997	4 429
Poland	8 435	9 203	11 487	11 714	9 632	11 719	12 629	12 375	11 827	13 070
Portugal	496	495	514	491	460	481	545	535	543	523
Romania	2 330	2 199	2 660	2 643	2 479	2 752	3 109	3 247	2 842	3 289
Slovenia	659	656	616	736	749	845	780	910	923	926
Slovakia	1 243	1 461	1 872	1 999	1 809	2 015	2 098	2 010	1 924	1 909
Finland	1 942	2 023	2 261	2 647	2 139	2 536	2 531	2 543	2 127	2 437
Sweden	4 538	4 973	4 963	5 915	5 636	6 078	5 755	5 995	5 951	6 135
United Kingdom	4 800	4 855	4 890	4 626	4 687	4 516	4 752	4 577	5 341	5 137
Liechtenstein	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Norway	725	709	780	868	733	734	782	810	693	691
Switzerland	2 292	2 383	2 348	2 473	2 687	2 701	2 629	2 734	2 762	2 830
Croatia	607	623	664	747	546	674	696	703	523	649
Turkey	2 087	2 616	2 678	2 782	2 569	2 788	2 897	3 046	2 894	2 859

FR: data include both simplified and detailed reporting (see methodological notes).
Source: Eurostat (online data code: rail_go_quartal)

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data availability

The figures presented in this publication have been extracted from the Eurostat rail transport database on the 5th December 2011. They include data on national, international and transit transport of the Member States, collected according to the current Regulation 91/2003 (that has replaced the Council Directive 80/1177/EEC since 2003).

The following table presents some characteristics of data availability:

Country	Characteristics of data availability
IE	Irish rail ceased international freight traffic in 2004
FR	Quarterly data (Table 2) include all railway undertakings (under detailed and simplified reporting).
CY, MT	No railway transport.

Methodology

The various elements present data collected under the detailed and simplified reporting systems. Simplified reporting is an alternative to normal detailed reporting for undertakings for which the annual total performance of freight transport is less than 500 million tonne-kilometres.

Railway lines in Liechtenstein are operated by ÖBB (Austria) and statistics are reported by Austrian authorities under simplified reporting.

Quarterly figures are only collected under detailed reporting.

For CZ, DE, EE, IE, EL, LV, LT, PT (2009), FI, SE and UK, the detailed reporting covers all undertakings, so quarterly aggregates and annual data are comparable.

Graph 1, Graph 2 and Table 1 combine both simplified and detailed reporting statistics while Table 2 is based on detailed reporting only (quarterly data). Moreover, detailed reporting in Figure 1, Figure 2 and Table 1 is based on annual figures while it is based on quarterly figures in Table 2.

Definitions of various kinds of rail transport

Total rail transport

Total rail transport (in tonne-kilometres) was calculated as a sum of national, international and transit transport, where international transport is the sum of international loaded and unloaded in the reporting country.

National rail transport

Rail transport where the goods are both loaded and unloaded within the same reporting Member State, irrespective of the route followed by the railway vehicle.

International rail transport

Rail transport where the goods are either loaded or unloaded, but not both, in the reporting Member State, with a distinction between goods loaded and goods unloaded.

Rail transit

Rail transport where the goods pass through the reporting Member State without being loaded, unloaded or transshipped.

Tonne-kilometre

Unit of measure of freight transport which represents the transport of one tonne of goods (including packaging and tare weights of intermodal transport units) by rail over a distance of one kilometre. Only the distance on the national territory of the reporting country is taken into account for national, international and transit transport.

Symbols

: not available

- not applicable

0 actual zero or very negligible transport

c confidential

This publication was prepared with the assistance of Mathieu Erzar.

Further information

Eurostat Website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat

Data on "Transport statistics"
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/data/database

Further information about "Transport statistics"
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/introduction

Journalists can contact the media support service:

Bech Building, Office A4/125, L-2920 Luxembourg

Tel.: (352) 4301 33408

Fax: (352) 4301 35349

E-mail: eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu

European Statistical Data Support:

With the members of the 'European statistical system', Eurostat has set up a network of support centres in nearly every Member State and in some EFTA countries.

Their role is to provide help and guidance to Internet users of European statistics.

Contact details for this support network can be found on the Eurostat website at:
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/.

All Eurostat publications can be ordered via 'EU-Bookshop':
http://bookshop.europa.eu/